2004 –2005

Saskatchewan
Provincial Budget

Performance Plan

Minister's Message

It is my pleasure to present the performance plan for the Department of Labour for 2004-05 and beyond.

The world of work has enormous impact on us individually and as a society. Both economic growth and the quality of life for Saskatchewan people benefit from fair and balanced labour legislation. The changing nature of work, demographic shifts in the province's population, new industries, technologies and markets – each of these challenges us to ensure that Saskatchewan's workplaces are healthy, safe, fair, family-friendly and co-operative.

Equality for women is essential to ensuring Saskatchewan is a province with a wide-open future. While women's participation in the workforce, educational accomplishments and career opportunities are greater than ever before, governments must respond to the issues and barriers that continue to confront women if they are to more fully participate, benefit and contribute to our society and economy.

The Department's 2004-05 plan continues to focus on compliance with the established standards for fair, safe and healthy workplaces, the timely resolution of collective bargaining disputes, improved work-family/life balance and the increased reflection of issues affecting women in government policies. I am committed to completing the key actions identified in our performance plan and reporting on the Department's actual progress to the people of Saskatchewan in July 2005.

Saskatchewan Labour's vision is a prosperous province that benefits from healthy workplaces and the equality of women. We in the Department look forward to working with our partners in the women's community, labour and the business community in addressing the opportunities 2004-05 brings us.

Deb Higgins
Minister of Labour

Who Are We

Saskatchewan Labour's vision is a prosperous Saskatchewan that benefits from healthy workplaces and the equality of women.

The mandate of the Department is to ensure safe, fair and productive workplaces in Saskatchewan. The Department carries out this mandate through labour relations legislation; prevention, education and training services; promoting, developing and enforcing occupational health and safety and labour standards; providing support to injured workers; and assisting in preventing and resolving workplace disputes. The Department also works in partnership with all other provincial departments towards the goal of equality for all Saskatchewan women.

Saskatchewan Labour works with employees and employers in a variety of ways to help ensure positive workplaces and prevent negative outcomes within work environments. The Department has 180.8 full-time equivalent staff positions in offices in Regina, Saskatoon, Prince Albert, Estevan, Moose Jaw, North Battleford, Swift Current and Yorkton. Our mission reflects the realization that a thriving economy depends upon a shared commitment to safety, cooperation and equity by all employees and employers. Saskatchewan Labour's mandate was further broadened with the addition of the Status of Women Office to the Department, on March 31, 2002.

The Department's activities are categorized into seven main areas that focus on achieving our vision of healthy workplaces and the equality of women and our goals that support the economic and social development of the province.

The Labour Relations and Mediation Division provides information, training, bargaining assistance and mediation to labour and management in unionized workplaces. The Division assists unions and management to resolve difficult labour disputes and work stoppages due to strikes and lockouts. Conciliation is provided to parties involved in collective bargaining disputes. Grievance mediation helps parties resolve issues prior to the arbitration stage. The Division also helps parties improve communication and enhance, as well as rebuild, both working and bargaining relationships. The Division assists parties with interest-based negotiation (IBN), and grievance and workplace mediation, in order to prevent workplace conflict or resolve existing conflict. It delivers training to unionized workplaces in the areas of IBN and conflict resolution, to improve participants' problem-solving skills.

The Labour Standards Branch provides services to Saskatchewan employers and employees in support of fair and equitable workplace practices. The Branch's aim is not only to enforce the legislation, but also to ensure employees and employers are aware of their rights and responsibilities under these laws. The Branch investigates wage-related complaints; works with affected parties to resolve labour standards concerns; maintains a toll-free inquiry call center

during business hours and a 24-hour automated messaging system containing core information with the opportunity to leave a message for response at a later time; responds to requests for the Branch's position on specific fact situations and will suggest options meeting the requirements of the legislation that are suitable in the circumstances; develops and disseminates targeted information tools to inform employers and employees about their rights and responsibilities in the workplace; supports Saskatchewan Labour's website to ensure current and relevant information is available; and undertakes a variety of proactive initiatives to encourage and ensure compliance.

The Department works to improve workplace health and safety through five inter-related and complementary strategies. These include increasing employer/worker involvement in reducing workplace hazards; enforcing standards through workplace inspections and other enforcement tools; providing workplaces with technical support to identify and reduce hazards in such areas as air quality, radiation and ergonomics; providing youth and future workers with health and safety orientation before reaching the workplace; and increasing public awareness that health and safety must be part of workplace culture.

The Office of the Worker's Advocate provides assistance to and representation for any worker, or a dependant of a worker, who has suffered an industrial accident or disease and who is involved in a dispute with the Workers' Compensation Board concerning a compensation claim. The Worker's Advocates represent injured workers or their dependants at all levels of appeal with the Workers' Compensation Board. While the main focus is the representation of workers through the appeals process, the unit also assists injured workers or their dependants in any way that enables them to obtain the benefits to which they are entitled, without having to take the dispute through the formal appeals process.

The Education and Training Services Branch provides the strategic development, delivery and distribution of integrated programs and educational resources to address the principles of healthy and safe, fair and co-operative workplace practices. It works in partnership with a broad base of stakeholders, including: government, educational institutions, Aboriginal and Métis organizations, community-based organizations and business and labour groups. Key areas of focus include the development of materials related to the *Ready for Work* program, the integration of occupational health and safety and labour standards information into First Nations and Métis training and educational programs and the implementation and promotion of injury prevention initiatives, including *Grow Up With Safety.*

The Work and Family Unit uses a capacity-building approach, which provides practical assistance to Saskatchewan employers, employees and community organizations to deal with issues of stress and fatigue that arise out of the lack of balance between work and family. This assistance includes community development expertise on the growth of partnership groups that focus on work-family issues, as well as a range of knowledge-transfer resources, including self-help research instruments, which equip employers and employees to take steps to make their workplace more family-friendly.

Economic development and growth in Saskatchewan is strongly influenced by fair and balanced labour legislation. The Planning and Policy Division works with employees, employers and the associations that represent them, as well as community-based organizations and the general public, to ensure that policies, legislation and regulatory frameworks balance the interests of employees and employers by promoting and regulating healthy and safe workplaces, co-operation and employer and employee rights and responsibilities in Saskatchewan.

The Status of Women Office provides strategic direction and leadership to government on policy direction affecting the status of Saskatchewan women. In partnership with all government departments and the Crown Management Board, the goal is to achieve economic and social equality for Saskatchewan women. The *Action Plan for Saskatchewan Women* provides a framework to guide the government in addressing women's equality issues in the province. Through the Interdepartmental Committee of Advisors on Women's Policy, individual departments and agencies are responsible for ensuring that women's issues are considered in Government decision-making. The Office is a single window into Government for women's organizations and fosters relationships with community stakeholders. The Action Plan and its companion document *Government Initiatives Responding to Women's Issues,* are available on the web at www.swo.gov.sk.ca; and printed copies are available by contacting the Status of Women Office at 1870 Albert Street, Regina, Saskatchewan, S4P 3V7 or phoning (306) 787-7401.

This performance plan discusses many of the issues confronting the Department, and outlines a blueprint for how it will continue to promote healthy and safe, family-friendly, fair and equitable workplaces and the economic and social equality of women in a growing economy.

For more information about the organization of the Department, its programs and legislation, please visit our websites outlined in the "Where to Obtain Additional Information" section.

Plan at a Glance

Below is a summary of our plan for 2004-05 and beyond. The goals and objectives articulate the outcomes the Department is pursuing, which support advancement towards our long-term vision of a prosperous Saskatchewan that benefits from healthy workplaces and the equality of women.

This is the third performance plan publicly released by the Department of Labour; it builds on the 2003-04 plan we released last summer. The performance plan will evolve as we continue to consult with stakeholders and clients in refining Labour's strategic plan.

The goals and objectives identified in the plan are multi-year in nature. Over time we will work towards achieving our objectives in support of meeting our broader, long-term goals. A series of key actions for the 2004-05 fiscal year has been developed that support advancement towards achieving our objectives. In addition, a set of performance measures (outlined below) has been developed that will be used to gauge our progress in achieving our objectives. The Department will report on actual progress at year end in the 2004-05 Annual Report.

Meeting public expectations requires that the Department work closely with a number of key partners and stakeholders, including the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour, the Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce, women's organizations, community-based organizations and other professional service and safety providers.

OUR VISION

A prosperous Saskatchewan that benefits from healthy workplaces and the equality of women.

GOAL #1

Fair workplaces

OBJECTIVE 1 *- Increased awareness of, and adherence to, labour standards legislation*

Performance Measure:

- Per cent of the non-agricultural workforce that filed a complaint with the Labour Standards Branch

GOAL #2

Co-operative workplaces

OBJECTIVE 1 - *Facilitate the timely resolution of collective bargaining disputes*

Performance Measures:

- Per cent of agreements resolved in conciliation without a work stoppage
- Per cent of agreements concluded in conciliation where a strike or lockout has occurred
- Per cent of grievances resolved in mediation

GOAL #3

Healthy and safe workplaces

OBJECTIVE 1 - *Improved workplace health and safety*

Performance Measures:

- Per cent of Saskatchewan workers who are working in provincially-regulated workplaces [with 10 or more workers] that have Occupational Health Committees
- Lost-time injury rate for workers covered by Workers' Compensation
- Per cent of practical and applied arts high-school students receiving occupational health and safety orientation as part of the *Ready for Work* program

OBJECTIVE 2 - *Improved work-family/life balance*

Performance Measures:

- Number of workplaces/organizations that request assistance in becoming aware of work and family issues
- Number of workplaces that we are assisting to make sustained culture change through application of the work-family planner tools
- Number of work and family community-based partnerships

GOAL #4

Equality of Saskatchewan women

OBJECTIVE 1 - *Increased reflection of issues affecting women in government policies*

Performance Measure:

- Number of key government staff who have completed gender-based analysis training annually

2004-05 Financial Overview

Department funding supports healthy and safe, fair and co-operative workplaces in Saskatchewan and the equality of women. Health and safety and labour standards are promoted through prevention, education and training services and through legislative enforcement. The Department provides support to injured workers and assists in preventing and resolving workplace disputes. The Department also works in partnership with other provincial departments towards the goal of equality for all Saskatchewan women. The breakdown of Department spending by program area is shown below:

2004-05 ESTIMATES	*(in thousands of dollars)*
Administration	$ 1,001
Accommodation and Central Services	1,286
Education and Labour Research	2,390
Labour Standards	1,699
Labour Relations Board	690
Labour Relations and Mediation	510
Occupational Health and Safety	5,698
Worker's Advocate	535
Status of Women Office	378
Total Appropriation	$ 14,187
Capital Acquisitions	(20)
Amortization	34
Total Expense	$ 14,201
Total FTEs	180.8

Trends and Issues

THE CHANGING WORKPLACE

The modern workplace is more complex and diverse than that of thirty years ago. Work is undergoing both structural and demographic change. Not only is the very composition of the workforce significantly different, new industries, methods of work and markets have emerged in recent decades that have dynamically altered where, when, by and for whom work is now performed. The following, which illustrate the scope of the issues surrounding the modern workplace, are directly tied to the objectives and actions in the Department of Labour's performance plan.

CHANGING WORK PATTERNS

Though full-time jobs still predominate, part-time, contingent, contract and self employment now comprise a rapidly growing proportion of all work performed. Statistics Canada suggests that 20 to 25 per cent of employed Canadians are in "non-standard" work relationships. Workers in such arrangements have more unemployment and underemployment, more instability of income, less access to employer-provided benefits and are inadequately protected by labour legislation. Saskatchewan Labour undertakes periodic reviews of labour legislation to ensure that they reflect changing patterns of work. In 2004-05, the Occupational Health and Safety Council will undertake a review of *The Occupational Health and Safety Act, 1993* and *Regulations*.

REPRESENTATIVE WORKFORCE

Meeting the needs of the labour market in the face of labour shortages will require greater reliance on Aboriginal people, people with disabilities and visible minority workers who are currently under-represented in the labour force. Aboriginal people, according to Statistics Canada, are the fastest growing segment of Saskatchewan's potential labour pool, having grown from 7.8 per cent of the provincial population in 1986 to 13.5 per cent in 2001. The *Ready for Work* program, which is also delivered to First Nations schools, helps prepare young people to enter the workforce. One of the most profound changes in the last part of the 20th century has been the large-scale entry of women into the workforce, increasingly in non-traditional occupations. Statistics Canada reported that women accounted for 46 per cent of people with paid employment in 2000, up from 33 per cent in 1976. Initiatives outlined in the *Action Plan for Saskatchewan Women* will work to increase the participation of women in the labour force.

REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

One critical issue impacted by the changing nature of work is the ability of the current labour regulatory regime to address new demands. The industrial model of work, as characterized by centralized production, fixed work schedules and full-time, permanent work, allows for little flexibility. The "post industrial" model, as characterized by the current growth sectors of knowledge, information and service, globalization and free trade, is dramatically altering the way we work. Periodic reviews of labour legislation including *The Occupational Health and Safety Act, 1993*, which will be undertaken in the coming year, ensure that the rules that govern the way we work reflect how we work. The Department is also partnering with the restaurant and food services industry to increase awareness among employers and employees of their rights and responsibilities in the workplace so they may deal with issues as they arise and before formal intervention by the Department is necessary.

INCREASING WORKPLACE INJURIES AND ILLNESS

A safe, healthy, family-friendly, fair and equitable workplace is a key contributor to the province's social and economic well-being. Injuries and inequity in the workplace exact a heavy toll on both employers and employees, particularly new entrants to the labour force. In 2002, actual client claims through the Workers' Compensation Board totaled $173 million (compensation, medical aid and vocational rehabilitation). Although more people are now working in Saskatchewan, recent increases in the numbers of workplace injuries and illnesses require a renewed commitment to workplace health and safety. Based on advice from stakeholders, Saskatchewan Labour is addressing the rising number of workplace injuries through the *Action Plan for Healthy and Safe Workplaces*.

EMPLOYER-EMPLOYEE RELATIONS

Positive employer-employee relations that reflect co-operation and teamwork are essential to meeting the challenges of the changing nature of work, thereby maintaining Saskatchewan's competitive position. Prosperity and economic growth and further development of the provincial economy are dependent on high levels of worker productivity. This can be achieved through stable labour relations brought about by an open and unimpeded collective bargaining process. Saskatchewan Labour provides conciliation, mediation and grievance mediation services, as well as training to foster improved labour/management communications and relationships to prevent work stoppages.

BALANCING WORK AND FAMILY/LIFE

A substantial increase in the number of dual-earner families has intensified the stress and fatigue many employees experience as they attempt to balance their work-life responsibilities. Research further shows that work-family conflict impacts on the economic well-being of business and service organizations in the private, public and non-profit sectors. This has stimulated both employee and employer interest for government to take a lead in addressing this issue. Through the Work and Family Program, the Department provides practical assistance to Saskatchewan employers, employees and community organizations to deal with issues of stress and fatigue that arise out of the lack of balance between work and family.

ADVANCING EQUALITY FOR SASKATCHEWAN WOMEN

Women are capable of playing a key role in the economic, social, political and cultural development of Saskatchewan; however, they still face barriers that prevent them from participating fully. Issues such as labour force attachment, income and earnings, violence in the home and harassment in the workplace, adequate housing and health care, employment and training needs, balancing work and family, women's care-giving responsibilities for children and the elderly, not only affect women and their families, they affect society as a whole and governments at all levels. Addressing these issues in a meaningful way is a major challenge for the Government and requires a high level of co-ordination of many government departments. This role is the responsibility of the Status of Women Office. The framework for addressing these issues is contained in the *Action Plan for Saskatchewan Women*, which was released on October 3, 2003.

Changes from 2003-04 Performance Plan

The goals and objectives included in the Department's 2004-05 Performance Plan remain unchanged from those published last year.

In March 2002, the Department assumed responsibility for women's issues and created the Status of Women Office. The 2003-04 Performance Plan contained a goal and objective to reflect the mandate of the Office, but did not include any performance measures, as they were being developed at the time. For 2004-05 the following performance measure has been added to our plan:

- Number of key government staff who have completed gender-based analysis training annually

Goals, Objectives, Actions and Measures

This section outlines the detailed 2004-05 Performance Plan for the Department that supports advancement towards our vision of a prosperous Saskatchewan that benefits from healthy workplaces and the equality of women. Under each goal, a number of objectives has been established that support progress towards the broader goal statement. For each objective, a set of key actions that will be completed in 2004-05 has been identified. They are the means for making progress on the objectives. In addition, performance measures have been established for each objective to gauge progress towards meeting the objective.

The following principles guide the Department in the development of policy and delivery of programs and services:

Equity:	Demonstrate and promote the value of representative workplaces
Accountability:	Conduct all Departmental business in an effective, efficient, timely, transparent, consultative and fiscally-responsible manner
Respect:	Be culturally and gender sensitive in the development and delivery of policies, programs and legislation
Fairness:	Balance the interests of stakeholders in conducting all departmental business
Quality:	Ensure that proactive, client-focused services reflect social and individual expectations
Recognition:	Acknowledge the valuable contributions staff make in achieving the Department's mandate

GOAL #1

Fair workplaces

OBJECTIVE 1 - *Increase awareness of, and adherence to, labour standards legislation*

Labour standards legislation governs the way people interact with the workplace. It affects and is affected by the community it serves, including globalization of competition, technological advances, changes to the demographic structure of the workforce, work and family responsibility issues and worker vulnerabilities. As change occurs, the workplace must adapt appropriately. Enforcement and awareness activities must also adapt to ensure continued adherence to the regulations.

Adapting suggests that the Labour Standards Branch must periodically redirect some of its resources to new initiatives. The objective is to enhance compliance by providing timely access

to pertinent labour standards information that can be used to avoid or resolve workplace concerns by targeting non-compliant sectors and by continuing to investigate and resolve formal complaints.

A new unit, the Labour Standards Compliance and Review Unit, will begin accepting and investigating anonymous or third-party complaints and will initiate targeted audits where there is specific evidence to suggest non-compliance with *The Labour Standards Act* and *Regulations*. The implementation of this Unit will enhance the Branch's capacity to identify areas of non-compliance, since it will affect workers in all workplaces who can anonymously bring contraventions to the attention of the Branch without fear of reprisal.

The Branch will also work with specific sectors to develop and disseminate industry specific labour standards information packages.

Key Actions for 2004-05

- Amend *The Labour Standards Act* to provide job protection for employees who access Compassionate Care benefits through the federal government's Employment Insurance program.
- Develop and disseminate, in partnership with the restaurant and food services industry, written and web-based information tools, to inform employers and employees about their rights and responsibilities in the workplace.
- Maintain a toll-free inquiry-line call centre to provide labour standards information to the 50,000-70,000 workers, employers, and human resource practitioners who call annually.
- Create a Compliance and Review Unit to accept and investigate anonymous or third-party complaints where there is evidence to suggest non-compliance with *The Labour Standards Act* and *Regulations*.
- Undertake approximately 2,500 labour standards investigations in response to formal complaints.
- Assess approximately $1.5 million in unpaid wages.

What are we measuring?	**Where are we starting from?**
Per cent of the non-agricultural workforce that filed a complaint with the Labour Standards Branch	0.5% *[2002-03, latest data available]*

This measure quantifies the number of complaints received by the Labour Standards Branch, divided by the total non-agricultural workforce. The agricultural workforce is not covered by labour standards legislation; therefore, this segment of the workforce is excluded from the calculation.

A prosperous Saskatchewan depends in part on productive resource allocation and actions. Non-compliance with *The Labour Standards Act* and *Regulations*, which set out minimum rules governing the employer-employee relationship, causes frustration in the workplace, negatively affecting employees and their families, and causes concerns for competing businesses. Such concerns often lead to unproductive resource allocation or actions.

Measurement results provide insight into the level of compliance with the labour standards legislation and will assist the Department in reallocating or refocusing resources and efforts towards sectors with unacceptable compliance rates and complaints. The Department can have a significant impact on workplaces found in non-compliance; however, it has a low level of influence on complaints filed. This is due, in part, to employees' unwillingness to file complaints for fear of losing their jobs, but also because of business insolvencies where voluntary resolution of issues is no longer an option and formal complaints become necessary.

GOAL #2

Co-operative workplaces

OBJECTIVE 1 *- Facilitate the timely resolution of collective bargaining disputes*

Collective bargaining disputes have an impact on employee-employer relationships, overall worker productivity, the financial position of employers and ultimately the provincial economy. Timely resolution of disputes minimizes the negative impacts caused by disputes.

Key Actions for 2004-05

- Provide conciliation services to employers and unions requesting assistance to resolve disputes and conclude negotiations to establish or renew collective agreements.
- Conduct grievance mediations at the request of the parties to resolve disputes, which involve the interpretation and application of collective agreements.
- Act as an agent for the Labour Relations Board to assist in the settlement of first collective agreements, and provide conciliation or mediation services that are directed by the Board.
- Deliver training sessions to increase knowledge and awareness of conflict resolution skills that can be applied in the workplace.
- Assess and mediate workplace conflict.

What are we measuring?	Where are we starting from?
Per cent of agreements resolved in conciliation without a work stoppage	84% *[2002-03; latest data available]*

We are measuring our ability to assist the parties to move forward in the collective bargaining process, whether that means resolving grievances, concluding collective agreements, or allowing them to make other choices about alternatives such as arbitration versus strikes and lockouts.

Performance results may vary from year to year. Work undertaken by the Labour Relations and Mediation Division is subject to client demand and is cyclical in nature. The Department has no influence on the level of client demand; rather, the parties bear complete responsibility for concluding their own agreement. The role of conciliation is to bridge the differences between the parties and assist them in achieving a settlement.

What are we measuring?	Where are we starting from?
Per cent of agreements concluded in conciliation where a strike or lockout has occurred	100% *[2002-03; latest data available]*

We are measuring our ability to assist parties to negotiate through an impasse or deadlock and achieve a collective agreement that will bring an end to a strike or lockout.

These results may vary somewhat from year to year. The parties may consider using other dispute resolution mechanisms like interest arbitration to achieve final settlement of their differences. When this occurs, the Division would have no impact on the settlement. Mediation can assist the parties to resolve grievances in a great many cases, but they retain the option to continue on to arbitration if that process better meets their needs.

What are we measuring?	Where are we starting from?
Per cent of grievances resolved in mediation	87.5% *[2002-03; latest data available]*

We are measuring our ability to assist the parties to effectively resolve grievances as an alternative to the more expensive, time-consuming arbitration process.

Mediation can assist the parties to resolve grievances in a great many cases, but they retain the option to continue on to arbitration if that process better meets their needs. Work undertaken by the Division is subject to client demand and is cyclical in nature.

GOAL #3

Healthy and safe workplaces

OBJECTIVE 1 *- Improved workplace health and safety*

Each year, nearly 5 per cent of our provincial workforce *(Workers' Compensation Board Annual Report, 2002)* suffers from a work-related injury or illness severe enough to take them off the job. The Province's social and economic well-being depends on healthy and safe workplaces. The Department works to improve workplace health and safety through five inter-related and complementary strategies. These are: engaging employers and workers in reducing workplace hazards; making legal standards for healthy and safe work known and enforcing them; providing workplaces with health and safety services to meet standards, including research, technical services, information, education and training; providing youth and future workers with basic health and safety orientation before entering the workforce; and increasing public awareness to promote healthy and safe practices as part of the community and workplace culture.

Key Actions for 2004-05

- Develop and support the Saskatchewan workplace responsibility system through engaging employers and workers in reducing workplace hazards by:
  - ~ Supporting the 4,000 current occupational health committees and adding up to 300 new committees each year with a focus on larger, higher-risk workplaces; and,
  - ~ Helping workplaces develop occupational health and safety programs or systems in approximately 1,600 higher-risk workplaces, focusing on 400 workplaces with the highest injuries and illnesses.
- Improve compliance with Saskatchewan legal standards for healthy and safe workplaces by making sure standards are known and enforced through approximately 4,500 on-site inspections, an increase of 50 per cent as part of the Department's *Action Plan for Healthy and Safe Workplaces.*
- Reduce lost-time injuries by 5 per cent in 2004-05 by increasing the number of Occupational Health and Safety Officers visiting worksites and providing education and training on identifying and controlling workplace hazards.
- Implement the *Action Plan for Healthy and Safe Workplaces* by:
  - ~ Issuing more notices of contravention to ensure standards are met;
  - ~ Prosecuting more often for serious or repeated non-compliance with health and safety standards;
  - ~ Training more Occupational Health Committee members and occupational health and safety representatives to increase employer and worker education on injury and illness prevention; and,
  - ~ Enhancing technical support to workplaces to better manage hazards and address emerging issues such as SARS and West Nile Virus.

- Provide health and safety services for workplaces to meet health and safety standards by:
  - ~ Undertaking applied research to reduce workplace hazards in at least 10 targeted industries and occupations;
  - ~ Providing 4,000 technical services in such areas as hygiene, toxicology, ergonomics and radiation with increasing emphasis on ergonomic and radiation safety; and,
  - ~ Providing information, education and training.
- Assist the Occupational Health and Safety Council to undertake a review of provincial health and safety legislation, involving extensive stakeholder consultations, which may result in revised standards.
- Assist the Saskatchewan Radiation Health and Safety Committee in conducting a review of *The Radiation Health and Safety Regulations*, which will result in updated standards for radiation safety for workers and the public.
- Increase healthy and safe work practices, as part of community and workplace cultures, through:
  - ~ *WorkSafe Saskatchewan* promotion activities, such as the *WorkSafe Saskatchewan* website (http://www.worksafesask.ca/) with over 1,000 articles; and,
  - ~ Partnerships with public and private agencies, such as North American Occupational Safety and Health Week.
- Fund the following new positions within the Occupational Health and Safety Division:
  - ~ A radiation specialist to increase the number of radiation equipment inspections and improve adherence to regulation in the northern uranium industry; and,
  - ~ A second Occupational Hygiene Officer to provide field inspection and advice on ergonomics.
- Help young people make the transition from school to work by providing training to 160 teachers to deliver work skills education to approximately 4,000 students.

What are we measuring?

Per cent of Saskatchewan workers who are working in provincially-regulated workplaces [with 10 or more workers] that have Occupational Health Committees (OHCs)

Where are we starting from?

69%

[2002-03: latest data available]

Saskatchewan has developed a workplace responsibility system based on the active participation of employers and workers to meet or exceed OHS standards. Committees are a critical part of this self-monitoring system that keeps workplaces safe. They promote workplace safety in several ways, including workplace inspections, education, promotion/awareness initiatives and minutes that record committee activities to resolve workplace hazards. All provincially-regulated workplaces with 10 or more workers are required to have OHCs comprised of workers and employer representatives.

The number of workers covered by active OHCs is divided by the estimated number of workers in provincially-regulated workplaces with 10 or more workers. The OHC is a key mechanism to promote worker involvement and shared responsibility for workplace health and safety.

The Department has direct influence over the percentage of workers covered by OHCs to the extent the legislated requirements are enforced. The actual rate of compliance will be impacted by the commitment of employers to implement and support an OHC, particularly in smaller, more transient workplaces.

What are we measuring?	**Where are we starting from?**
Lost-time injury rate for workers covered by Workers' Compensation	15,174 workers or 4.95 per 100 workers per year *[2002; latest data available]*

The lost-time injury rate measures the number of injuries reported to, and accepted by, WCB per 100 full-time equivalent workers. The number of WCB accepted claims in a calendar year involving lost-time from work is divided by the estimated number of full-time equivalent workers based on Statistics Canada industry average wage data and WCB payroll information. As not all workers are covered by WCB, not all workers report injuries or illnesses and the estimated number of full-time workers is a derived number, the rate is a proxy for the actual number of workplace injuries or illnesses. Over the last thirty years, there has been a decline of 30 per cent, but the reported injury numbers and rates have increased in recent years. Increasing awareness, especially among young workers, of the need to report injuries may be increasing the estimated rate. A reduction in the number of lost-time claims will be indicative of fewer workers being injured or becoming ill on the job. The Department shares the Saskatchewan Workers' Compensation Board goal of reducing time-loss injuries by 20 per cent over the next four years.

This measure is commonly used in other jurisdictions and provides an indicator of the relative number, type and severity of injuries for most workplaces. The measure is based on WCB statistics and, consequently, some workers, notably most farmers and farm workers, are excluded. The data are based on reported and accepted claims. Also, the data tend to focus on traumatic events, such as injuries rather than illnesses, and as different industries tend to have different reported injury rates, changes in type of employment can affect the overall rate.

The Department has a low level of influence on the overall workplace injury rate. Economic factors among many others influence, on a yearly basis, workplace injuries.

What are we measuring?

Per cent of Practical and Applied Arts high school students receiving occupational health and safety orientation as part of the *Ready to Work* program

Where are we starting from?

Approximately 13%
(2002-03; latest data available)

Practical and Applied Arts teachers who have been trained in the *Ready for Work* program, which promotes understanding about workplace safety, fairness and co-operation, help prepare high school students to participate productively in the workplace.

Saskatchewan Labour has no influence over the Practical and Applied Arts courses that are offered in provincial high schools. However, through our ongoing collaborative working relationship with the Curriculum Branch of Saskatchewan Learning, the Department has a moderate level of influence over the training of Practical and Applied Arts teachers in the *Ready for Work* program. It is reasonable to assume that an increase in the number of teachers and students exposed to *Ready for Work* resources will be realized as a result of occupational health and safety and labour standards objectives being included as part of the core curriculum for Career and Work Exploration.

***OBJECTIVE 2** - Improved work-family/life balance*

The significant increase in the number of dual-earner families (and lone-parent families) has intensified the stress and fatigue many employees experience as they attempt to balance the needs of their jobs and their families. Employer interest has heightened in this issue as research shows that work-family conflict impacts on the economic well-being of business and service organizations in the private, public, and non-profit sectors. The Work and Family Unit was established to assist all sectors in the province to strengthen their capacity to develop workplaces that are more family-friendly.

Key Actions for 2004-05

- Provide a set of practical, field-tested tools (work and family/life planner), which will assist employers and employees to make workplace change that leads to improved work and family/life balance within 12 Saskatchewan workplaces, which may range from 10 to 3,000 employees.
- Continued to implement the "train-the-trainer modules", which cover seven steps from awareness to measuring the impact of successful change involved in workplace culture change in partnership with human resource associations, and possibly SIAST, the University of Saskatchewan and the University of Regina.
- Facilitate a provincial, community-based Family-Friendly Workplace Award as a response to the federal-provincial recommendation for jurisdictions to implement an incentive or awards program to encourage workable and co-operative ways to increase work-life balance.

- Facilitate public evidence-based dialogue on family-friendly public policy options.
- Facilitate the development of research capacity at the University of Saskatchewan and the University of Regina relative to work-family issues. Included will be the development of outcome measures to gauge the effectiveness of work-family/life programming.

What are we measuring?	**Where are we starting from?**
Number of workplaces that request assistance in becoming aware of work and family issues	30 *[2002-03: latest data available]*

This measure quantifies the number of workplaces and organizations that request the Department's assistance in becoming aware of work and family issues. Increased workplace knowledge on work and family issues is a precursor to improving work-family/life balance. Measurement results gauge voluntary involvement of employers, employees, and organizations in becoming more family-friendly.

The level of requests is unpredictable and influenced by factors such as other workplace issues, changes in human resource personnel, and availability of management time.

What are we measuring?	**Where are we starting from?**
Number of workplaces that we are assisting to make sustained culture change through application of the work-family planner tools	1 *[2002-03: latest data available]*

This measure quantifies the number of workplaces the Department is assisting in making sustained culture change through application of the work-family planner tools. The work-family planner tools (print and electronic material) include guides on change techniques, a local case study, and a set of field-tested instruments which assess family-friendly strengths, gaps, and employees' priorities for multi-year workplace change objectives. Sustained culture change refers to a two-three year process, which develops a family-friendly approach to many aspects of work, including work arrangements, management style and the overall attitudes and values within the work environment. Many factors such as economic well-being and organizational readiness, as well as available marketing resources, limit our level of influence over the measurement results.

What are we measuring?	Where are we starting from?
Number of work and family community-based partnerships	3 *[2002-03; latest data available]*

This measure quantifies the number of work and family community-based partnerships that have been developed and maintained in Saskatchewan. The capacity building approach of the Work and Family Unit assists representatives from business, labour, community and government sectors to partner in order to undertake public education and specific projects related to the lack of work-family balance. These groups reflect local interests and play a critical role in enhancing workplace and general public awareness about the importance of work-family balance. Whether these groups really 'gel' is a product of numerous contextual factors over which we have little control.

GOAL #4

Equality of Saskatchewan women

OBJECTIVE 1 - *Increased reflection of issues affecting women in government policies*

The Government of Saskatchewan recognizes and appreciates women's diverse contributions to the success and prosperity of this province. Women are capable of playing a key role in the economic, social, political and cultural development of Saskatchewan, but they still face barriers that prevent them from participating fully. Issues such as balancing work and family, women's care-giving responsibilities for children and the elderly, violence in the home and harassment in the workplace, adequate housing and health care, employment and training needs, not only affect women and their families, they affect society as a whole and governments at all levels. Saskatchewan women represent a substantial and valuable pool of human resources. If their collective potential is to be fully realized, governments need to respond to the issues and barriers women confront in ways that are innovative and productive.

It is important to note that some women, particularly Aboriginal women, visible minority women, and women with disabilities, face additional barriers and challenges to achieving equality. Policies and programs, to be fully effective, must respond to diversity as well as gender to facilitate the achievement of all women's full potential.

Through the *Action Plan for Saskatchewan Women*, the government will support initiatives that will assist women to move forward in many aspects of their lives – economically, socially, politically and culturally. The Action Plan identifies key government initiatives under four objectives:

- Economic equality and security of all Saskatchewan women
- Safety for all Saskatchewan girls and women
- Health and well-being for all Saskatchewan women
- Equitable participation of women in leadership and decision-making

Currently, key government policy and decision makers are attending gender-based analysis training, which will provide them with the skills and tools to identify how government policies and programs impact women, men and diverse groups of women and men in Saskatchewan.

Key Actions for 2004-05

- Monitor and report on progress made on the proposed 57 actions in the *Action Plan for Saskatchewan Women*.
- Deliver a systematic process to guide the integration and monitoring of gender-based analysis (GBA) into government decision-making processes by providing training and education for managers, senior policy analysts, advisors and key government staff and monitor the extent to which GBA is incorporated into decision-making processes.
- Provide expert advice, analysis, and resources to remaining public sector employers who are dealing with any aspect of the development of policies or programs related to women and/or women's issues.

What are we measuring?	**Where are we starting from?**
Number of key government staff who have completed gender-based analysis training annually	42 *[2002-03; latest data available]*

This measure quantifies the number of staff across government who receive GBA training. The quality of the training is also measured through a pre-training assessment and post-training evaluation. Training is important if individual government departments and agencies are to ensure that women's issues are considered as an integral part of their policy development and decision-making processes.

Where to Obtain Additional Information

If you have any questions or comments about the plan, or would like additional copies, we invite you to call:

Saskatchewan Labour
Communications Branch
(306) 787-3637

Or visit us online at:
http://www.labour.gov.sk.ca

For additional information, visit:
http://www.readyforwork.sk.ca
http://www.swo.gov.sk.ca
http://www.workandfamilybalance.com
http://www.worksafesask.ca
http://www.sasklabourrelationsboard.com